

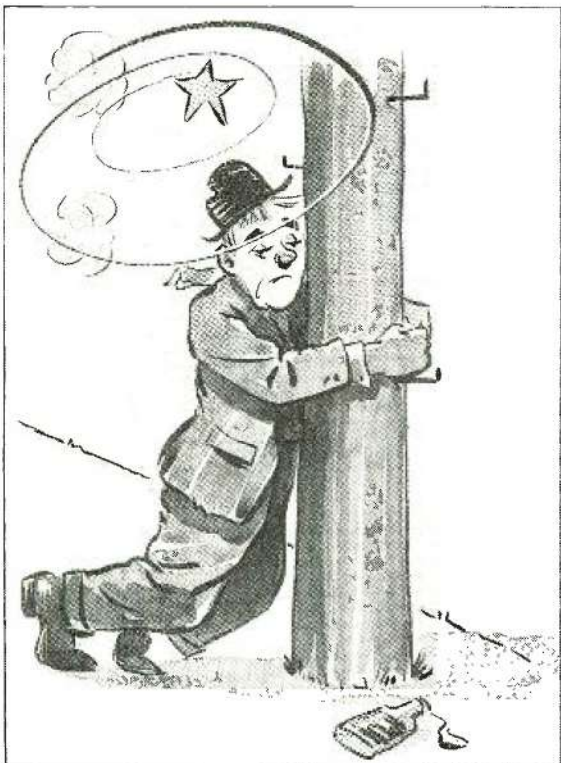
UR telephone rang one recent morning. It was CBS calling. "You've been asking when CBS would start sending out images," a voice said, "Hurry down! We're putting on a test pattern today."

So down we hied to the network's Madison Avenue building where a receiver was tuned to the video signal from the Chrysler Building transmitter. We found a small group of writers and CBS engineers huddled about a receiver all staring at the test pattern and the network's own photographer rigged up a trick tripod arrangement to photograph the still image on the receiver screen.

There wasn't much to see. The test pattern was the standard one we had seen in earlier transmissions. But we did gather reports from disinterested observers around New York that the CBS video signal packs a tremendous wallop and one television set-owner in Westchester County thought the signal strength indicated exceptional coverage when regular program service is started.

Test programs cannot be far off now. There really is every indication that a skeleton schedule will be on the air by the time these lines reach print. Columbia's video plans have been postponed so many times that guessing at a definite program date is no easy task. But it now seems that the early weeks of 1940 will see the sight-and-sound station getting a practical workout.

**WHEN** CBS launches a regular program service over W2XAX, a new and more sensitive type of icono-



TELEVISION TERMS MADE EASY!  
"Vertical Polarization."

# The VIDEO Reporter

by SAMUEL KAUFMAN

scope camera will be utilized. Details of the new picture pickup device were not available at the time this information reached us from a reliable Columbia spokesman. However, it is claimed that marked improvements will be noted.

Other Columbia television plans now include a mobile unit for the picking up of news and sports events. Not so long ago, the network wasn't so sure this would be essential, but it's likely that NBC's success with a television relay station-on-wheels proved that the idea is a "must" for every telecasting transmitter.

Inter-city television program tie-ins are also in CBS video plans, we were told. A network representative declared that an interchange is anticipated between W2XAX and a unit to be operated by WCAU, the chain's Philadelphia affiliate.

**T**HERE is a tendency among television workers to compare present video images with old-time movies. How anyone could make that comparison we cannot understand, unless they've forgotten how poor the old-time movies really were.

Just to check up on what the movies of yesterday were like, we visited the Museum of Modern Art and viewed some of the films in its library. We saw Sarah Bernhardt and Lou Tellegen in *Camille* and Douglas Fairbanks in *Robin Hood*, among other films. And our conclusion is that television as it is today is not only *better* in quality than old-time movies but is almost as good as the films Hollywood is turning out this very season!

Mind you, however, we are discussing *image quality and not production*. Television cannot yet afford—and may be never will—the "colossal, stupendous, gigantic" spectacles put out by the movie studios. But I've already seen some television productions which, despite technical handicaps, could give stellar Hollywood directors a

pointer or two on visual drama technique.

Of course, a big drawback is the small-size television screen. But the quality is there!

Television is not and we venture to add never will be the underdog insofar as the talkies are concerned. It is an independent medium and the aloofness of the talkies is caused by priority and not superiority. Give television time. It's the *Video Reporter's* guess that talkie producers will soon be looking for television affiliations on a mass scale.

**W**E think it's about time to add a few comments on NBC telecasts in recent weeks. This is the formative stage of the new art and the New York programs will have an effect on schedules of video stations in all parts of the country. Hence, the New York transmissions carry national significance.

Dramatic programs are good. Mystery plays have been particularly impressive and exceptional results were noted in operetta and musical comedy. Variety has sort of fallen off, probably due to lack for good iconoscope material.

Sports are the smash hits of W2XBS. Every assignment under this heading wins new recruits to the look-and-listening audience and dealers are cleverly using the prize-fights, football games and other scheduled athletic events as choice promotional and demonstration material.

News and special events usually score favorably but there aren't enough of them. This is largely due to the bulkiness of the mobile television unit. This program heading should come to the fore when NBC adds some new lightweight portable video pickup units at an early date.

Fashion shows and other attempts to show new apparel seem boring as television program fare. But maybe they don't seem that way to women! After all, television, like radio, must cater to all persons.

Educational programs seemed to lack a vital "something" to this viewer. An educational telecast can be entertaining as well as informative. Radio proved that with many outstanding series and television should do likewise. Actually, with the facility of providing a visual aid, television

(More Video Reported on page 59)

**Video Reporter**

(Continued from page 31)

can do a better job with instructive programs than radio has done to date.

**O**NCE again—and this time with little ballyhoo—NBC used telephone lines to convey a sporting event from Madison Square Garden to the Radio City television studio. The Tony Canzoneri-Al Davis prizefight was the event and NBC holds the pick-up was good, showing marked improvement over a bike race telecast employing the same wire relay method a few months earlier.

This event was very significant. It showed that the bike race program was not of the stunt variety and that continued use of the wire plan may lead to a wide-spread permanent use of telephone relays for video presentations.

Prize-fights seem to be ideal for television. It's a pity that fight promoters seem to fear the use of television as a threat to their business. We're told that they are not worried by the fact that persons can look-in at home. There are too few sets in private use to let that point disturb them. But it's said that they are annoyed by large groups of persons flocking to video-equipped public and semi-public spots—such as stores and theatres—to view the fight.

**I**T didn't take long after the start of regular television programs in New York for several entertainers' unions to attempt to gain jurisdiction over the newest performing medium. A truce was effected with the arrange-

ment last November to establish a committee to negotiate talent contracts for a half-year. The committee includes representatives of the *Actors Equity Association*, the *Screen Actors Guild* and the *American Federation of Radio Artists*.

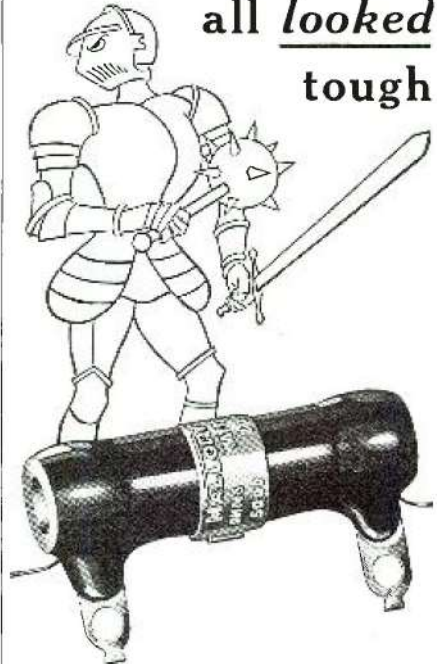
**E**LLSWORTH C. DENT, educational director of the *RCA Manufacturing Company*, recently predicted a wide field for television as an educational aid when network programs become available on a national scale, according to word reaching us from Camden. We didn't receive the full text of Mr. Dent's talk which was delivered at the third annual *Southern Conference on Audio-Visual Education*, but we will comment, however, on the brief summary sent out of his firm's headquarters. That a wide field exists for television as an educational adjunct is certain. But we don't think it has to wait for national networking. There's no reason why the topic must be neglected in single video service areas before the establishment of a television network. Education can be a major program heading right at the start of individual station's schedules.

**W**E'VE been hearing a lot about television networks lately. Of course, such a development as linking stations in various parts of the country together is an important step. Particularly impressive are the plans under way to relay NBC's New York programs to the *General Electric* video station in Schenectady. This link, as well as the contemplated New York-Philadelphia relays, may be the wedge for nation-wide networking. But we think it's more important at this time to start local program services in as many areas as possible. A network cannot exist until enough local stations are in operation. The immediate industry trend should be to promote telecasting in all important population centers.

**W**E hear of a spurt in activity at several experimental stations in various parts of the country. The fact that unscheduled test programs are going out at frequent intervals shows there's still life in some of the old licensees. The experimental licenses don't call for a definite amount of "on the air" hours. Commercial licenses probably will. And being obligated to a regular schedule—and a costly one at that—is something to consider carefully in advance. It's likely that when the *FCC* says the word "Go!" on commercial telecasting, several of the present experimental stations will drop from the field entirely.

**W**HEN we consider what's happened to television in England since the start of the new European War we can't help but think that perhaps the *FCC* is doing the right thing about not letting television run away with itself in this country. Of course, trade conditions are drastically differ-

**Knights in armor  
all looked  
tough**



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ent in a neutral nation, but when we hear of the disappointments brought about in the London area due to the suspension of television programs after more than 20,000 receivers were in use, we think it is essential for a substantial program service guarantee to be made in every area where sets are sold.

It was recently mentioned in a London plea for resumption of video service, that the Postmaster-General once gave an assurance of continuation of television programs until 1941. But it seems that the service period could not practically be continued after war was declared.

The result: Millions of dollars are tied up in equipment that cannot be used. Even this might be unimportant as compared with the huge task that awaits the British television industry in re-selling Londoners on television when the war ends. The abrupt ending of the initial television service—even though the action may have been an obvious necessity—will call for supersalesmanship in the reintroduction of the product. —50—

**Serviceman's Experiences**  
(Continued from page 20)

I've been active as a registered volunteer Scouter, and I know my deeds contribute to a worthy cause."

"He could have repaired his own set, instead of bothering us, couldn't he?" I asked. "By the way—what's this extra work get you?"

"The satisfaction of seeing boys grow into better men," Al replied, "but I wouldn't expect you to see any value in that sort of thing."

"I work for five years in a radio store with you, and what am I?" I asked the ceiling. The boy friend of the whirling dervish—with a partner gone dizzy doing good turns!"

"You needn't be so cynical," Al came back. "If you want to be over-practical, don't forget the good will in the boy's family isn't exactly bad advertising."

"I thought so," I said. "After all that high-sounding talk, you've got your hand out!"

"The good will is incidental," Al said, using a tone that made me end the session. But the argument wasn't over.

As I stepped out of the truck the next morning, I spotted Lewand coming toward the store carrying two table models. That, I decided, was the occasion for a show-down with Al—before we were saddled with a double load of the repair requirement.

I picked up the tool-bag, ran into the store, and called Al to the counter. "That Scout is coming here again,"

I said, "and I warn you I'll stop work the minute you begin to waste any more time with him." I threw down my tool-bag as an accent against youth. "What's more," I continued, wagging my finger under Al's nose, "If you don't get rid of him quickly, you and I are permanently through!"

Al wanted to answer, but I didn't give him a chance. Instead, I turned and strode sedately out the door. That is, I *would* have strode sedately if I hadn't tripped over the tool-bag.

What a fall!—all over the place! I couldn't get up; one ankle seemed to be full of hot solder. I was sitting on the floor, leaning back on my elbows, when Lewand entered. He laid the two sets on the counter.

"These belong to my father and my uncle," he explained. "If you finish work in time, please deliver them tomorrow night."

Then he saw me on the floor. "Why—what's the matter?" he asked, kneeling and putting one arm behind me.

"He just failed in an acceptance test for power diving," Al explained, "and came to rest in a position of siesta."

"Ohhh!—my ankle," I groaned.

Lewand removed his neckerchief and bound it tightly around the top of my shoe. "Might be a bad sprain," he announced, "so you'd better get a doctor. This bandage will act as a temporary support till you get to bed. Here—put your left arm across my shoulders and stand on your right leg."

My feelings had changed completely while I watched him care for me. "Where did you learn that first aid?" I asked.

"A Scout is always prepared," the boy replied, pulling out his Scout Manual. "The temporary treatment

**IF STALIN WERE A STREETCAR MOTORMAN**

... he would not be listed on the company payroll as a dictator! If repairman John Doe improves the operation of Mrs. Jones' receiver, should he be labeled a "radio engineer"? The title "radio engineer" has often been seriously abused, and has therefore fallen into disrepute among the men most deserving of its use. What, then, are the requirements necessary to justify the title "radio engineer"? You should know! Don't fail to read "WHAT IS A RADIO ENGINEER?" ... in the

*March Issue*



**ON SALE FEBRUARY 9**